

## ABSTRACT

A bit rate-independent optical receiver ensures transparency with respect to changes of the transmission format and its associated bit rate in relation to an optical 5 communications system. The optical receiver includes an opto-electric converter for converting an input optical signal into an electric signal, an amplifier circuit for amplifying the electrical signal, a bit rate-sensing circuit for generating a sensing signal with a voltage level determined on the basis of the bit rate of the electrical signal, a bit rate-recognition circuit for generating a recognition signal further amplified from the sensing signal, and a 10 clock/data recovery circuit for reproducing a clock signal and data from the amplified electrical signal in accordance with a control signal. A controller determines a bit rate corresponding to the voltage level of the recognition signal by referring to a look-up table of the bit rate to the voltage level and provides the clock/data recovery circuit with the control signal representative of the bit rate.